Which Computer Science Class should I take?

Exploring Computer Science is for students with little or no previous knowledge of programming.

AP Computer Science Principles is for students who have completed an introductory course, but are not yet ready for **AP Computer Science A**. The course is taught using App Inventor with a concentration in Android App development, and C#. The course is focused around computer science concepts, algorithms, data processing, and simulation.

You should consider both your programming knowledge and your personality. In general, students who program on their own, as a hobby, perhaps helped by family members who know programming will do well in the AP CSP course. On the other hand, students who have only been to a summer camp, or who have only done robotics in middle school, or who prefer learning directed by a teacher, usually do not have the skills needed to do well in the fast-paced AP course.

AP Computer Science A students must have completed Integrated Math II or equivalent AND either completed Exploring Computer Science or AP Computer Science Principles. **In addition, students should be strong, independent, mature learners who are able to work through challenging problems without seeking immediate assistance or getting frustrated.**

More Information:

Exploring Computer Science – developed by researchers at UCLA and the University of Oregon with NSF funding – will expand opportunities for students to prepare for more advanced computing courses, including the college-level AP Computer Science Principles course. Exploring Computer Science focuses on the creative aspects of computing and computational thinking. Like AP Computer Science Principles, it encourages and enables students to apply computational approaches to issues and interests relevant to their lives and helps students to develop many important college-readiness skills such as critical thinking, communication and teamwork through hands-on projects and problem solving.

With the launch of AP Computer Science Principles in the 2016-17 academic year, AP will offer two computer science courses — AP Computer Science A and AP Computer Science Principles.

Currently one of the fastest growing AP courses, AP Computer Science A focuses on computing skills related to programming in Java. The new AP Computer Science Principles course will complement AP Computer Science A by teaching the foundational concepts of computer science as it aims to broaden participation in the study of computer science.

AP Computer Science Principles	AP Computer Science A
Curriculum is built around fundamentals of computing including problem solving, working with data, understanding the Internet, cyber-security, and programming.	Curriculum is focused on object-oriented programming and problem solving
Teachers choose the programming language(s)	Java is the designated programming language
Encourages a broader participation in the study of computer science and other STEM fields, including AP Computer Science A	Encourages skill development among students considering a career in computer science or other STEM fields
AP assessment experience: • Two performance tasks students complete during the course to demonstrate the skills they have developed (administered by the teacher; students submit digital artifacts) • Multiple-choice questions (written exam)	AP assessment experience: • Multiple-choice and free-response questions (written exam)